



Maryland Department of Planning

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Press Release

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State Board Certifies Prince George's County Farmland Program

MALPF Recognition Retains More Tax Revenue for Local Land Protection Efforts

BALTIMORE, MD – Recognizing the efforts of Prince George's County officials to protect farming in a rapidly growing county, the [Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation](#) (MALPF) last week certified the local farmland preservation program. Certification allows the county to retain a higher percentage of the local agricultural land transfer tax for protection efforts and provides a formal pat on the back for significant work to protect farmland.

To receive certification, a county applies to the [Maryland Department of Planning](#) and MALPF. Planning Secretary Richard E. Hall earlier this month approved Prince George's application for certification after the Department's review.

"The efforts by Prince George's County to protect farmland are significant and praiseworthy," Hall said. "In a fast-growing county like Prince George's, local leaders are making the decision to grow in the right places, leaving productive farmland intact."

In the last five years, Prince George's County stepped up efforts to protect farmland and redirect growth. The county has 1,600 acres under protective easements through MALPF and another 1,300 acres protected under county easement programs. The county's Priority Preservation Area – natural resources or farmland designated in a county's comprehensive plan as worthy of protection – contains 85,588 acres. County officials also designated a rural tier containing 103,356 acres, or 28 percent of Prince George's County's land area, showing that in addition to using their own tools to improve their land protection program, the county was strategic in building on state initiatives, too.

"Prince George's County has made a substantial commitment to land preservation over the past several years," said Agriculture Secretary Buddy Hance. "We commend the county for working in collaboration with the local and state agencies to complete their certification to further enhance the county's targeted preservation efforts."

Much of the reason for the state certification is attributable to the commitment of Prince George's officials to both retaining farmland and promoting agriculture. County leaders are planning for agricultural economic growth, market development and regulatory reform. In recent years, the county has undertaken a host of policies, programs and statutes that support local farming, including establishing a purchase of development rights program, allowing agritourism enterprises like wineries and bed and breakfasts, and expanding the definition of agriculture to include equine uses.

As a result of certification, the county will keep 75 percent of the locally generated agricultural land

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Anthony G. Brown, Lt. Governor

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transfer tax instead of the current 33 percent, with the remainder remitted to the state. All of the agricultural land transfer funds are used for land preservation. Prince George's is the 14th county to be certified in Maryland.

At current development rates, Maryland is set to lose 226,000 acres of farmland by 2035. MALPF has helped landowners permanently protect 295,000, acres of agricultural land from development on 2,100 farms.

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